

ADDRESS BY VAN I. BOWMAN BEFORE FORT WAYNE RADIO CLUB ASSEMBLED FOR
ANNUAL BANQUET AMERICAN LEGION HALL POST 47. FORT WAYNE IND., JAN 17-1953.

Mrs. Davis, Members of the Fort Wayne Radio Club, XYL s,
Guests, and friends:

The Fort Wayne Radio Club had its beginning in the year Nineteen Hundred and Twenty Two. I have in my possession a list of the Charter Members of the G. E. Radio Club of 1922. Two names appearing on this list are members of the present F W R C. They are Quimby Elkins, and George Graue. Quimby moved away for a few years and had a break in his record, George, on the other hand, has been a continuous member throughout all the Club's many years.

To continue on, In 1924 the group which inherited the books from the G E Radio club, called themselves the Knights of the Midnight Key. In 1928 the name became The Radio Traffic Association of Ft Wayne. And finally in 1930, the name was changed to the present Ft Wayne Radio Club. All existing records of membership, and Treasury, and Minutes, have been well preserved and have become a part of the Fort Wayne Radio Club's Record.

There were at least three organizations previous to the year 1922, possibly four.

For example, The Governments' Radio Service Bullitin of June 1917 referred to the club operating here in 1916 and 1917, namely The Fort Wayne Radio Association of Indiana. It carried an announcement that that body's QRM committee met every 2 weeks. Thus we see that QRM was a problem of considerable magnitude, even in that early day/

In 1919 the very energetic Y M C A Radio Club was organized, and in 1920, The Old Fort Spark Gang.

Regretfully we do not have the records of these earlier Clubs.

But we are still hopeful. Right now, attics are being combed, and the contents of old trunks are being inspected for some record, or

RETURN TO W9FMJ HISTORIAN

some slip of paper which will show the earliest Club. If a suitable record can be found and turned over to the F W R C we will lay claim to being possibly the second or third oldest Radio Club in all of North America.

When we say 1922, we immediately think back 31 years -- quite a long time ago, but radiowise, it was a long, long time ago.

Let us take for the first part of our story, those events which took place previous to 1922. Let us go back, even to the turn of the Century because, someone has said that Radio came in with the Twentieth Century. True, numerous experiments were carried on before 1900, both in this country and in Europe. The properties of induction, magnetism, capacity, and even radiation, to a degree, were known to such men as Maxwell, Hertz, and Faraday. These were the men of science. But it remained for the young student, Marconi, to combine the inventions of the men of science and apply them to the art of communication. Hence it is incorrect to say, I think, that Marconi invented radio. It seems more proper to say that He was the father of Radio.

Between 1894 and 1896 Marconi had succeeded in transmitting intelligence over a distance of, first, 200 feet, then 4 miles, and finally across the English Channel. In 1901 he came to these shores and prepared to bridge the Atlantic. On a rocky point in Newfoundland he set up a receiving station. His accomplice remained on the other side of the Atlantic to do the transmitting. A large kite, more than 8 ft. long was raised with which he attempted to lift some 2000 ft. of copper wire. The wire broke and the kite was lost in the Atlantic. Next, a gas filled balloon was tried and this also broke away, and was carried out to sea. On the third day, and on the third attempt, he used a kite again and this time the line held. At 11:30 A.M. he began listening. He heard signals. Three dots. Then three more. The letter "S" over and over again. Unmistakably identifiable. The miracle of it. He had very meager apparatus. Almost nothing.

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A vacuum tube detector, you say? One tube? No. No tube.

There was not a single vacuum tube in the whole world. And in all the capitals of the world there was scarcely a dozen people who comprehended radio or wave propagation. Two days later, when he gave his statements to the press he made headlines around the world. Radio was born.

In 1906, both the silicon and the carborundum crystals were invented.

These were important inventions because they bridged that period of the first ten years of Radio until we could produce the first radio tube.

This first tube appeared in the year 1912. The first DeForrest AUDION.

It was a soft detector. No good as an amplifier. In a few moments I shall refer to at least one ham who was operating before the invention of the first tube. In 1912 we find, also, the first attempt at legislation to regulate Amateurs and broadcasting.

In 1914 the Radio Club of Hartford, Conn was incorporated. And one year later the first QST appeared. From this organization, three years later, we have the A.R.R.L., the American Radio Relay League.

During this period all operation was confined to 1800 meters to 600 meters. Hams, U.S.N. Commercial, and all radio that existed was found in the same place. The U.S.N. was the only regulating body and had no power of enforcement. One was likely to hear an argument between some Ham and some lake boat going something like this. The boat operator might request the Ham to desist, or to stand by to enable him to make some intended contact. The reply might be, blank, blank, move yourself, I've got just as much right here at you." And he did have. And generally maintained it too. It was the U.S.N. however, which closed all operation with the beginning of hostilities. Everything had to be dismantled and placed under wraps. Transmitters, even receivers, and antennas. At the end of the war period there was a new authority, The Bureau of Navigation, of the Department of Commerce.

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Licensing was still not required. That is, so long as the Ham's signal did not cross the state lines, or if he was not engaged in interstate traffic handling, license was not required. Broadcasting music and other entertainment was permitted if the Ham first obtained a permit to invade that part of the spectrum reserved for broadcasting.

In October 1919, G.E. launched the powerful Radio Corporation of America. And in this same year effected a merger with the Marconi Radio Telegraph Co. Thus, R C A was in the message business, and this checkmated the Westinghouse interests in that same field. So Westinghouse immediately turned to Broadcasting.

On Nov. 2-1920 the Harding-Cox presidential elections were two days away. Westinghouse obtained Dr. Frank Conrad's amateur transmitter 8 X K and had it set up on the roof of the tallest building in East Pittsburgh. The antenna termination, the single carbon mic, and all apparatus was housed in a little dog house on the roof. Thousands were able to hear the news that Harding had been elected.

The first scheduled musical program was a Band Concert. The weather was bad so a tent was provided on the roof. Later, when they had obtained a room in the building they attempted to have more Band music but it would not work. So they went to the roof and hauled down the tent and brought it inside the room, then seated the Band under the tent. Everything worked fine. The first scheduled speaker was the Hon. Herbert Hoover. Sec. of Commerce. This station became, and remains to this day, K D K A.

But G.E. was not to be outdone by their rival. They too were building a powerful transmitter of nearly 500 watts. This one was for the U.S. Navy. The Navy, however, had refused delivery because it would not work.

Or at least, the Navy did not have suitably trained personnel who could make it work. At any rate when the Dempsey-Carpentier fight was at hand two hams offered to put the thing on the air and broadcast results of the fight.

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Permission was granted. Statements were given to the press scheduling the broadcast. There was so little time. The apparatus lay in the railroad yards in Jersey City. Close by was the tallest building, which was the Railroad YMCA. It so happened that this YMCA was the terminal resting place for all the colored Pullman porters, and these colored people resented the intrusion. They even threatened violence. A police watch had to be obtained. Finally the apparatus was set up and the fight started. The prize fight, that is. There was a telephone line from ring side through the operator's switchboard to within a few steps of the transmitter. The first ham would shout the announcement into the phone, and the second man hearing it, would slam down the phone and run to the transmitter and put ~~the word~~ on the air, — then run back and get the next announcement. It was a terribly ordeal. But it was a success because it had been well publicised and the Elks Lodges throughout the East and Middle West had installed receivers such as they were and had thrown their lodge halls open to the public. In the excitement of the hour, the tubes became so hot that the wax was melted from their bases, the oil filled condensers bubbled over, and slopped their sticky mass on the floor, and the entire transmitter was a blackened ruin. The Navy never did get their transmitter. It became Jersey City's W J Y.

In 1921 Amateurs had a choice of 5 tubes to choose from. Broadcast stations had the same choice. There were no more. It was a simple matter to go through the tube manual of that day. All tubes bore the prefix UV which was RCA's trade mark. There was the UV 200 Soft detector. UV 201 amplifier. UV 202 5 watter. UV 203 fifty watter. UV 204 500 watter. The next year the same tubes appeared with the prefix "C" for Cunningham line. The first Radio Call Book came out in 1921 by authority of the U.S.Navy. It cost .25 cents.

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An inspection of the U.S. Government's Radio Service Bulletin of 1922 shows that by May of that year there were 8 broadcast stations licensed in the state of Indiana. These included, among others, WBAA Purdue Univ. West Lafayette, and WBAQ South Bend.

Fort Wayne was not to have a station for another two years. The first broadcast station in Ft Wayne was W C W K which was later inherited by W G L. There was also WBHU, and 4 others. WOWO appeared in 1925.

There is a comical little story that goes with the operating of one of the early Ft Wayne stations. Les Watson was the possessor of two tubes. Two of those prized fifty watters. The broadcast station was dependent upon these tubes to get on the air. Accordingly, the broadcast station had a daylight license, and used the tubes during the day, Les used them at night in his Amateur transmitter. K.D. Ross was the station's first engineer. On this particular occasion, when the station closed down at the end of their day period, Les took his two tubes and carefully slipped them, as he was accustomed to do, one in each of his overcoat pockets, and left with two companions.

Now Les was not a bad ~~man~~, but after all, this was the Holiday season, and so his buddies persuaded him to stop at a speakeasy. From there they went to a home brew place on Broadway, and then back to Main Street again. Came the dawn. There was a frantic call at his residence to locate the tubes. He had not come home. His bed had not been slept in.

A search was made. Two hours later he was located across the street from the broadcast station, in the basement, stretched out on a great long table. Still wrapped in his overcoat, and the tubes still in his pockets.

They simply rolled him over, took the tubes from his pockets and rushed them to the station and resumed broadcasting. I have just received word that these same two famous tubes will be moved from the Historical Museum to a berth under glass at the New Memorial Coliseum.

So much for the commercials. Let us inspect the achievements of just two of our Hams during this early period.

One began making transmissions as early as 1908.

For a transmitter he used a 1 inch spark with 6 volts on the primary.

For a receiver he used two carbon rods sharpened to a chisel edge.

Across the edges of these two he balanced a common steel sewing needle.

In 1910 he had a tuning coil wound on an outmeal box.

In 1911 his greatest thrill came, when he copied the U.S.N. gunboat in the harbor at Havanna Cuba. In 1912 he was a regular listener to the signals emanating from the roof top of the old Congress Hotel in Chicago.

In those years Northern and Central Indiana was noted for it's extensive interurban ~~train~~ system which had lines radiating from all the principal cities. It was the popular pasttime to take one of these interurban cars to some point 30 or 40 miles distant, set up the transmitter and send signals back to the home station.

On one such occasion, this young man of our story took the interurban train from his home in Lafayette to the little village of Mulberry, Indiana.

When he alighted from the interurban a pastoral scene met his eyes.

Almost no automobiles were ever encountered. It was quiet. There were no land lines overhead. No power or telephone lines on the country lanes.

Just cows in the pasture, a lazy stream of clear water, trees and grass.

He set up his transmitter and transmitted a prearranged set of signals.

Then he gathered up his little black boxes and went to his cousin's house for dinner and took the interurban back to his home again. But before

boarding the interurban he passed along the windows of the local print shop.

The old gentleman inside was just getting out his weekly paper. An interview took place. But the publisher, like so many others, was skeptical.

He refused to print anything so fantastic. In order to transmitt a message he said, it was necessary to have wires all the way to Lafayette much the same as the telegraph lines along the tracks. There was no conceivable way he said for a message to run up a wire a dozen or so feet into the air,

and then be received on a similiar wire in Lafayette. He refused to print .
He did, however, check up on the boy later, and print an account of the
experiment. In 1915 this young ham moved to Ft Wayne. His first call
was 9 F G. His present call, W 9 V K X. Mr. Gilbert M. Wilson.

Another ham of this early period was a student at Central High School.
By 1912 he was quite experienced, even with that first DeForrest Audion.
This was the old round audion. Mounted on the top of a little black box
which had a rheostat on the side of the box. You operated one of these
devices much the same as you did the old coal oil lamp-- you know, you
turned the wick up a little brighter. This tube had to be turned up until
the light from its filament hurt your eyes. Then you would listen.
Hearing nothing, you would turn it up a little bit more. And then some
~~more~~. Until it seemed that the very next instant that the thing would
melt down before your very eyes. Finally, when you began to hear static
you might manipulate the tuner, if you had one, and hear someone.

This young man had one of these famous tubes. In 1919 he was a member of
the Y M C A Radio Club. In 1920 he was a member of the Old Fort Spark Gang.
And in this year, also, came his greatest thrill when he worked 8 T K
on 200 meters using loop modulation with a UV 202.

In 1921 the Wolf & Dessaur store operated a radio parts counter.

This young man was their radio salesman. And in this same year the
store received their first shipment of a UV 203. The young man bought
that first UV 203 in Ft Wayne. It cost him \$30. He took it home and
proceeded to work Hawaii with it. He still has that first UV 203. And,
it's filament still burns.

His call was 9UC. Later 9CRH, still later 9AMM and finally in 1940
the original call was restored with the W attached, W 9 U C.

Thank you Mr. Charles Kronmiller.

Some other early calls were 9 U H, D W May.

9 P C Central High School. 9 M E Vern Slagle. 9 G W Mr. Kerbach.

9 L L A Les Watson. 9 A E C Doc Enslen.

Just why do we find so much interest in a Club in 1922, and

just how does it come to be a G.E. Radio Club?

It was almost impossible to get a radio receiver except by building one.

To built one required new found knowledge. Knowledge of circuits and apparatus was to be gained by attending a radio club. The General Electric Company was in the tube business. G.E. was winding coils, even designing receivers. But there was still one more reason why a radio club was a prime requirement. Some effective way had to be found to deal with that all important problem of QRM between spark and C.W., and between Fone and C.W.

In searching thru the records I have come upon one thing more than any other, ~~XXXXX~~ namely QRM, and the near fist fights that followed the hot arguments. The record states that the members felt that any meeting was not much of a success unless they could provoke one of these arguments. And they had some good technical speakers in those days too. One of these was Earl Springer, W9BWI who gave the first technical talk on Television as early at 1928. And in 1931 both he and Ray Hupp, W9CLF had TV transmitters on the air, but that is another story.

On March 30, 1928 the Fo t Wayne Radio Club in meeting assembled at the Chamber of College, was interrupted by an urgent telephone call for any Hams with workeable transmitters. Every telephone and telegraph line to the East into Ohio had been flattened to the ground by a heavy snowfall and ice. Not a single wire remained standing. The Pennsylvania Railroad had 14 trains backed up behind the wreckage of poles and wire.

The record says that W9AAI and W9BKJ ~~XXXXXX~~ and four others immediately left the meeting to get on the air.

Twelve hours later they had succeeded in bringing thru such famous trains as the Broadway, The Manhattan, and the New Yorker.

In 1937 came the Ohio River floor, and quite a large number of local Amateurs answered the call. Many loaded their own transmitters and precious receivers in the back of some old rusty truck and took off for the hills of Southern Indiana. It was not over in a day, nor a week, but they stayed until the job was finished.

The next emergency of any consequence was the Fort Wayne flood in 1943. The only Amateur operation on the home front during the war was the W E R S. War Emergency Radio Service. But Ft Wayne was fortunate in having one of the best equipped and best organized W E R S in the country. It reached an ultimate strength of 30 portables, and 4 walkie-talkies. When the call came then from HQ for assistance to the local police and National Guard, to prevent a break through in the dike system, it was a simple matter for designated units to set up at the dike side. Within a matter of minutes after first contact had been made with HQ there was an urgent plea for a load of sand or earth. Just when the earth fill began to bubble and become spongy, the precious load of sand arrived and was quickly dumped on the spot. More bags of sand were heaped on top and the dike continued to hold. Throughout the night patrols found other weak spots and these were subsequently dealt with. The city's Lakeside area was saved from a devastating flood of 12 to 14 feet above street level. The local units attracted national attention and the N B C sent people here to make recordings of the operation of our W E R S. There have been other emergencies and the members have always maintained a readiness to serve.

Twelve hours before the test, subjects received a 100 mg dose of the drug.

Manhattan, and the New Yorker.

In 1987, more than 2000 River Clams, and other oyster species, of Israel

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...and the fact that the ...

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How the call was first made for assistance to the local police and

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In 1946, something took place which has served to bring all the Amateurs in the state closer together. I refer to the Indiana Fone Net. This, at first, was a local affair on Sunday mornings. You might hear W9BKJ ABP CLF IDZ AQO SWH and ~~many~~ others. W9DOK of Muncie, put in his nickel's worth, as you have so often heard him say. A frequency was selected at 3905 kc.

The net began to recruit stations down state, but for a long time it was just another Yankee net--there was not a single station south of the Mason-Dixon Line of Indiana, namely U.S. Road 40. Finally we picked up stations at St Paul, Ind. Terre Haute, Guilford, Lawrenceburg, Franklin, and finally Martinsville, Columbus, Petersburg and many more.

The net today is a dependable working organization, and many of our brethren from other states uphold us and have aspirations of duplicating our system of operations.

The CW net was also organized again following the war, as well as various 10-meter nets, mobile nets and others.

The next best thing that happened to us was the organization of the I R C C. This body provides us with at least one Hamfest Picnic annually and otherwise sponsors an all around get together. The I R C C was host to the Central Division Convention at French Lick one year ago last October.

And now, just a word to the future, and one more item.

A ham has built an electronic watch. This watch, because it is battery excited is able to keep so much better time than the most accurate spring-driven watch built to date. The battery for this watch corresponds in size to this pencil eraser. Look for this contribution to the field of electronics--you will ^{be} seeing them on the market this coming summer.

[illegible]

Speaking of wrist watches, most of you I think, are acquainted with the Dick Tracey comic strip which features the Hero's 2-way wrist watch radio. Fantastic, yes. But realistic also.

Such a radio receiver has been built, and it works.

Something you will need when building one of these is the transistor.

I have here a representation of the mighty transistor. This device actually replaces vacuum tubes. It is an excellent rectifier, detector, multiplier, amplifier. Even at the ultra-highs, and the super-highs.

Thus my story, has referred to that period in our history which was without tubes, to that great era of tube development, and now the present in which, for certain applications, at least, we are not dependent upon tubes again.

You will be using more and more of these, especially since the trend is toward smaller and smaller components.

Good luck, and good hamming.

I thank you.

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and others on all around get together. The I R C was just to

the (1960) District Convention at Fresno that was your age last October.

and you, that's what to the future, and we were there.

A few miles an electronic watch. This watch, because it is battery

powered, is able to keep as much better time than the most accurate

mechanical watch will be able. The battery for this watch corresponds

in size to the small wrist. Look for this contribution to the field of

electronics--you will find them on the watch--this coming summer.



